

to whatever the competitive developments are, so that we don't just throw cold water on them.

I wish I could stay all day. You guys have been great. I hope you will support this. It means more jobs for this country.

And also, don't forget, one of the things I want to emphasize again, it didn't come up in the questions. When I was at the United Nations a few weeks ago, I had a reception for the leaders of all the other Latin American countries who were there. And I can tell you that Argentina and Chile and Venezuela and Colombia and Bolivia and a lot of other countries that are struggling to maintain democracy want to open up markets with us, and they want to buy our products. Tiny Colombia, in the last 2 years, has increased their purchase of American products by 69 to 64 percent a year. This is a big deal. But if we don't do NAFTA, they'll wonder whether we're really serious about embracing all of Latin America.

Again, I say I hope you will support it. I do believe that it will give us in the short term a competitive advantage over the Europeans and the Japanese. But the most important thing is it will pressure them to adopt a new worldwide trade agreement. American workers are now the most productive in the world. You've got to believe in yourselves. We can do this. We can compete. We can win if we have access to the markets. That's what this gives us.

Thank you very much. We need your help.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. on the production floor. He was introduced by employee Roberta Canady. In his remarks, he referred to Marvin L. Mann, president and chief executive officer, Lexmark International, Inc. A portion of the question-and-answer session could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Appointment of Officials to Senior Executive Service Posts

November 4, 1993

The President today approved seven men and women for Senior Executive Service posts at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Labor, and the Agency for International De-

velopment, U.S. International Development Cooperation Agency.

"I am pleased to announce the addition of these hard-working men and women to my administration," the President said.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Jeanne K. Engel, General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Housing, Federal Housing Commissioner

Art Agnos, Regional Administrator, Region IX

Margery Austin Turner, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research, Evaluation, and Monitoring, Office of Policy Development and Research

Department of Labor

Edmundo A. Gonzales, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of the American Workplace

Oliver B. Quinn, Deputy Solicitor of Labor, Office of the Solicitor

U.S. Agency for International Development

Nan Borton, Director, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, Bureau for Food & Humanitarian Assistance

Ramon E. Daubon, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Latin America and the Caribbean

NOTE: Biographies of the appointees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks on Establishing the Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement Reform and an Exchange With Reporters

November 5, 1993

The President. First of all, I want to thank the leaders of Congress who are here and make a couple of comments, if I might. I am delighted that now both Houses have acted on the crime legislation. I congratulate the House and the Senate, and I look forward to working with them on getting the strongest possible crime bill out we can and hopefully meeting that goal that I have had for a long

time now of putting another 100,000 police officers on the street, which I am convinced will do more in less time to lower the crime rate than anything else. I also hope that we can now move forward to a debate in the Senate and the House on the Brady bill. I hope that it will pass before the Senate goes home and the House goes home.

Finally, let me make one other preliminary comment. During all the debates on the budget, many of which were acrimonious and partisan, there was virtually 100 percent understanding on the part of every Member of Congress that, over the long run, our ability to bring our budget closer to balance and to free up money for needed investments required us to take a hard look at the entitlements part of our budget.

The budget that we have just adopted has been very successful in many ways. It's helped to bring interest rates to historically low levels. We've got investment coming back into the country. We have more jobs coming back in. But we don't have the money to invest in new ventures that might be important to our national defense or to our economic growth and that's because we had to adopt steep defense cuts and a hard freeze on domestic spending for 5 years while the entitlement growth continued unchecked.

As a result of that, today I am establishing by Executive order a bipartisan commission to look into the issue of entitlements of our Government, how it works, and what's the impact on the budget long-term as well as into the general tax structure of the Federal Government. I want to acknowledge and thank the leaders, Republican and Democrat, of the House and the Senate for agreeing to support this commission and name members to it. Two-thirds of the members will be appointed by the congressional leadership on a strictly bipartisan basis. I will appoint a third.

And then I want to give special attention to two Members of the Congress who have worked on this very hard. One is Senator Kerrey who had the idea for this commission, and I intend to name him the Chair. The other is Senator Danforth of Missouri, who is in his last term but has been interested in the entitlement issue for a very long time, and I have asked him to serve as the Vice

Chair. We will be naming the rest of the commission in the fairly near future. But I'm hopeful that this commission, by next spring, will be able to do some work which will chart a future for the Congress and for the country, which will enable us to do the people's business up here and keep the country moving forward into the 21st century.

So I thank all the leadership for their willingness to support this. And I'm going to sign the Executive order and then we'll answer a few questions and get on with our meeting, because there's a vote in the Senate.

[At this point, the President signed the Executive order.]

NAFTA Debate

Q. Mr. President, why are you putting the Vice President up against the king of the one-liners? Aren't you sacrificing a political career here?

The President. Let me say this, I certainly appreciate the way you characterized it. If we get an honest discussion of the issues, the Vice President will do just fine because he's an accomplished debater and, more importantly, because he's got the evidence on his side. I understand why Mr. Perot wanted to have a rally packed with people that he could get there who already had their minds made up against NAFTA. But I think the Vice President's issued the challenge to show up in Florida and have Larry King moderate the debate. And if we get a genuine discussion of the issues, I'm very confident that he'll do fine. It was his idea; I've got to compliment him. It wasn't mine. Wasn't it?

The Vice President. Absolutely—

Q. Why do you feel it's necessary to take on Ross Perot to do what many people would consider sinking to his level?

The President. Why are you sinking to his level, Mr. Vice President? *[Laughter]* Why did you want to do that?

The Vice President. I think the country does this from a discussion of the facts about NAFTA. What we're finding is that a whole lot of people in the Congress say, "We agree with you on the facts, but we're getting a lot of political pressure on the other side. Is there any way that you can get the facts out to a wider audience?" And I think the discussion of what NAFTA really does—it

creates new jobs in America. The volume of our products being shipped to Mexico has been increasing twice as fast as the volume of their goods being shipped here. The more discussion of the facts, the better.

Q. Are you going to do one debate or three, Mr. Vice President?

The Vice President. Well, I've contacted Larry King and said that first of all, I issued this challenge; he accepted and proposed Florida. I said I'll be there on Sunday. I contacted Larry King. And we want a neutral format and a neutral place. I don't want to go to a rally filled with 20,000 people on one side of the issue. He was generous to say that he would buy the television time. Well, let's let Larry King provide the television time.

Senator Mitchell. Why don't you pay for the television time?

The Vice President. I considered that—[laughter]—I considered just picking up the tab.

Q. Mr. President, aren't you the slightest bit concerned, not the least bit worried?

The President. No. We're making progress on NAFTA. I feel good about it. And what we find is that if people—I went yesterday, when he was having a press conference saying I wouldn't answer questions from ordinary workers. I was with a thousand ordinary working people in Kentucky answering their questions. They were good questions, good, firm, hard questions. But I just believe that this is one of those issues where the truth will set you free. I think the more people know, the more they'll be for it.

We have confidence. The Vice President, actually, when he went on David Letterman, I knew that he could stick up Ross Perot on one-liners, right? So, that's it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Executive Order 12878—Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement Reform

November 5, 1993

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.), and in order to establish a Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement Reform, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. (a) There is established the Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement Reform ("Commission"). The Commission shall comprise 30 members to be appointed by the President. Ten members shall be Senators, five each from the Democratic and Republican parties. Ten members shall be Members of the House of Representatives, five each from the Democratic and Republican parties. Ten members shall be individuals from either the public or private sector who have experience and expertise in the areas to be considered by the Commission.

(b) The President shall designate a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from among the members of the Commission.

Sec. 2. Functions. (a) The Commission shall recommend potential long-term budget savings measures involving (1) revisions to statutory entitlement and other mandatory programs; and (2) alternative tax reform proposals. The Commission shall report its recommendations respecting potential entitlement and other mandatory program savings and tax system revisions to the National Economic Council and to the Congressional leadership by May 1, 1994.

(b) The Commission shall decide by a three-fifths vote which recommendations to include in the report. At the request of any Commission member, the report will include that Commission member's dissenting views or opinions.

(c) The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out its functions, hold such hearings and sit and act at such times and places, as the Commission may find advisable.

Sec. 3. Administration. (a) To the extent permitted by law, the heads of executive de-